

Claims

All of the claims standing for examination are reproduced below.

1-58. (Canceled)

59. (Previously presented) A telephony bridge unit, comprising:

- A first interface for connecting to a connection-oriented switched telephony (COST) network;

- a second interface for connecting to a data network for data network telephony (DNT) calls;

- a protocol converter for converting calls between DNT and COST network protocols;

- a processor for managing operations of the bridge unit; and

- a data repository storing code and data;

wherein the bridge unit, receiving a call from a caller on the COST network, accesses a look-up table in the data repository relating COST telephone numbers to data network addresses, retrieves a data network address associated with the COST telephone number, places a data network call on the DNT network to a destination using the data network address, connects the incoming COST and outgoing DNT calls, and translates protocol in both directions between the COST and the DNT networks while the calls are connected, and in the event of receiving a call on the data network, accesses information in the received call indicating a COST telephone number, places a call on the COST network to the COST number, connects the incoming DNT and outgoing COST calls, and translates protocol in both directions between the DNT and the COST networks while the calls are connected.

60. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 59 wherein the COST network is a publicly switched telephony (PSTN) network.

61. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 59 wherein the data network is the Internet, and the DNT calls are Internet Protocol Network Telephony (IPNT) calls or voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) calls.

62. (Previously presented) A method for managing telephone calls in different protocols, comprising steps of:

(a) upon receiving a call for a specific destination from a connection-oriented switched telephony (COST) network at a bridge unit having a first interface for connecting to the COST network and a second interface for connecting to the DNT network, retrieves a data network address associated with the COST telephone number, places a call on the DNT network using the retrieved destination, connects the incoming COST and outgoing DNT calls, and translates protocol in both directions between the COST and the DNT networks while the calls are connected; and

(b) upon receiving a call on from the data network, uses a COST number received with the call to place a COST call to that number, connects the incoming DNT and outgoing COST calls, and translates protocol in both directions between the COST and the DNT networks while the calls are connected.

63. (Previously presented) The method of claim 62 wherein the COST network is a publicly switched telephony (PSTN) network.

64. (Previously presented) The method of claim 62 wherein the data network is the Internet, and the DNT calls are Internet Protocol Network Telephony (IPNT) calls or voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) calls.